

11.
KEDARMINSTER - Stuff.

A new PIECE of Print:

OR, A

REMNANT

OF

Mr. BAXTER'S *PIÆ FRAUDES*
UNRAVELLED.

BEING

AN APPENDIX

TO

Nonconformists Plea for Peace
IMPLEADED.

By J. B. Worcestershire.

If I should zealously press my Judgment on others, and seek to make a Party for it, and disturb the Peace of the Church, and separate from my Brethren, I should fear lest I should prove a Fire-brand in Hell for being such a Fire-brand in the Church. I charge you therefore, if God should give me up to any factious Church-rending course, that you forsake me, and follow me not a step. See Baxter's Saints Rest, Epist. Dedic. to the People of Kedarminster, p. 8, 9.

L O N D O N :

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A
R E M N A N T
O F
Mr. BAXTER'S *PIÆ FRAUDES*
U N R A V E L L E D.

S E C T. I.

Mr. Baxter's Title-page.

THere's a Book of late extant called [*Nonconformists Plea for Peace* :] 'Tis called a [*Plea*] though it be indeed meer Magisterial dictating above what any Metropolitan would arrogate or pretend to ; and is apparently more like a Plot than a Plea, meerly to disturb the Churches Peace, and embroil the Nation.

'Tis called a Plea for [*Peace*], though it be indeed for Schism ; and no more a Plea for Peace, than the Author's fighting against the King was a making Peace with him. See who will, how well 'tis fitted to alienate the minds of Ministers and People, to seduce the Weak, and to confirm the Factious, to exasperate Governours, and possess the minds of men with hateful and rebellious thoughts against their Government, to disturb the Peace of Church and State, and to lay the Grounds of a lasting Separation ; and he shall find that 'tis more likely to set three King-

doms in a Flame, than to settle Peace in one ; it being certain that such Paper-lights as these Pleas for Peace, did help to inflame the Kingdom with the late Civil War : 'Tis well known they were such Outcries against Bishops and Ceremonies, that first brought in plea the Kings Prerogative ; 'twas pretence to Reformation and the purity of Religion, to tenderneſs of Conſcience and the power of Godlineſs, that brought men firſt to unjuſt Sequeſtering and wreſting away Eſtates, then to plundering and cutting of Throats, and at laſt to the baniſhment and murder of Princes : In a word, to that which in times of the late Uſurpation robb'd us of our Laws, Government, and Peace, tore and worried our Church and State, making it a prey to Tyranny and Sacrilege, which ſtain'd the Proteſtant Religion with Royal Bloudſhed, and cover'd Fields with the Carcaſſes of many thouſand Chriſtians. I ſay, that which did this, was pretence to Reformation and purity of Religion, the Bloud-thirſty Zeal of thoſe Puritans who (as Biſhop *Bancroft* foretold) would never give over their Cry for Reformation, till they had ruined us Church and State ; and whatever ſpecious titles and pretences this *Plea for Peace* may have, 'tis certain its duct and tendency is no better: what's moſt material in it, hath had its diſquiſition by the judicious Impleader. I have now to do but with ſome of the Rubbiſh and Impertinencies of it, which that worthy Author has paſt by as leſs worthy of his notice.

SECT. II.

Of their Separate Congregations.

THE Pleader begins with Churches. His firſt undertaking is to ſhew what Churches are of Divine Inſtitution, and what not ; where he endeavours, by dark Definition and nice Division, to make the Church like the Multitude, many Heads, the forking it into Dichotomies meerly to amuſe the people, repreſenting to them the Notion of a Church as ſome unintelligible

intelligible thing, to make their Schism, the harder to be discerned. He tells us, p. 8. *He doubts not but that a Society of Neighbour-Christians associated with a Pastor for personal Communion in Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship, (such as their Meetings are) is of Divine Institution.* His 16th and 17th Sections are to the same purpose: which I have found his Followers to take for proof, that their Congregations are true Churches, and of Divine Institution. But I doubt not there are thousands of good Christians in England, that will as soon believe these Assemblers Heads to be truly Steeples, as those Assemblies to be true Churches, especially as now managed.

1. To the great contempt of those more publick Assemblies that have the stamp of Authority both from God and man, and which are of that which is the onely Church National that ever was reformed from Popery by a Law, and not out of Huddles and Tumults, as *Geneva* and most of the Reformed Churches beyond Sea were; which Reformed Church or Churches in England, as the first Reformers planted with their Sweat, so their Successours watered with their Bloud, and particularly those Martyrs *Cranmer, Ridley*, and others, that were the first Compilers of the Common-prayer.

2. Their Antichurches are kept up to the begetting of those Schisms and Divisions, which the best of Christians in Primitive times have accounted as bad as Heresie; as *Chrysost. Epist. ad Eph. Edit. secund. p. 823.* τὸ εἰς αἵρεσιν ἁμαρτανεῖν τὸ πρὸς ἐκκλησίαν χρίσται ἢ ἐκείνου εἶναι κακίον, *To divide the Church (says he) is no less evil [or sinful] than to fall into Heresie.* And *Aug. Ep. contra Parmen. l. 2. 2. Vix crimen aliquod, &c. There is scarce any thing so bad as Schism; not Idolatry, said Dyonis. ap. Euseb. l. 6. Not Sacrilege, said Optatus, l. 1. Τὸ ἀρχὴ κακῶν, the original of Evils, said Ignatius, Ep. ad Smyr.* Mr. Baxter says (Plea, p. 3.) *Indeed could they find out the Schismatick, he hopes he would be condemned of all.* But what Quaker, Papist, or Schismatick who ever could not say as much? *And if they knew indeed what Schism is (says he, p. 3.) they would avoid it.* As though all those most learned and best of men in their Ages, *Ignatius, Cyprrian,*

prian, Augustine, and others that wrote so much against Schism, knew not what Schism is, but wrote against they knew not what; or as though so great a Polygraphus as Mr. Baxter, after so many years dabling in their Writings, could not find out the definition of Schism. But,

3. God never instituted Churches to be kept up in disobedience to those Christian Magistrates which he commands us to obey upon pain of damnation, *i. e.* eternal damnation, as Mr. Baxter expounds it, *H. Commonwealth*, p. 352. telling us further, *Thef.* 319. *That disobedience to our Rulers, is in Ministers* (says he) *double treason and wickedness.*

4. In his same *H. Commonwealth*, *Thef.* 240. he teacheth, *That 'tis necessary to the Churches peace, that no private Congregations may be gathered, or Antichurches erected, without approbation and toleration from the Magistrate.* [Where he means plain enough, all Congregations separate or distinct from the Parish-Churches, as theirs now are.] Adding in the same page, *That if private Assemblies be permitted unlimitedly, then* 1. *it will be impossible to restrain Heresie, Infidelity, or Impiety; yea, 2. they may meet* (saith Mr. Baxter) *to plot against the Magistrate: And no Assemblies whatever,* says he, [meaning beside those of the Parish-Church] *are to be allowed by the Magistrate.* Again, *Thef.* 263, (saith he) *If Magistrates forbid Ministers to preach or exercise the rest of their Office in their Dominions, they are to be obeyed.* For which he instances in *David, Solomon,* and other Kings taking down and setting up Priests, and ordering the Officers of the House of God. And what he says in his *Plea*, p. 218. (*That where there is no necessity of their preaching, Nonconformists should forbear it,*) condemns the practice of most Nonconformists in England.

5. 'Tis a little regardable, that many of these Antichurches are kept up by those very persons who blew the Trumpets of Rebellion in XLIII, and were the most active Pulpiteers in setting forward the late Civil War, and after that the Regicide; which will be made evident in the ninth Section following: And that these Meetings are all kept up by those who look upon them-

themselves as bound by Oath (the *Solemn League and Covenant*) to endeavour all the days of their lives the extirpation of Church-government by Bishops, Deans, &c. i. e. to endeavour the Overthrow of that Government in the Church which is by Law establish'd; and so to act over again the Tragedies of Civil War, when opportunity and power shall give them leave.

SECT. III.

Of Bishops.

THe Pleader comes next to Bishops, and tells us, p. 6. 13, 14, 15. *That in Scripture-times a Bishop had but one fixed society, one Church or worshipping Assembly, under him; and that the greatest defenders of Prelacy have affirmed, that Churches Provincial, Patriarchal, National, &c. are but of Humane Institution.* *Ans.* So have the greatest defenders of Nonconformity affirmed Churches Congregational, Classical, and all others, as well as Dioceſan, Provincial, &c. to be of Humane Institution onely. *The ordering of such distinction of Churches, are left (saith Mr. Tombs, Theodul. p. 21.) to divine Providence and humane Prudence.* Among those great defenders of Prelacy he mentions none but Dr. Hammond, and that most falsely and injuriously, thus: [*That though this Title* *Πρεσβυτερος* *bath been extended to a second Order in the Church, and is now onely in use for them under the name of Presbyters, yet in Scripture-time it belonged principally, if not onely, to Bishops; there being no Evidence that any of that second Order were then instituted, though soon after there were such instituted in all Churches.*] From which words the Pleader infers two things: 1. That the Office of a Presbyter that was no Bishop, was not in being in Scripture-times: 2. That no Bishop had more than one worshipping Assembly at once. To the first, *Ans.* The Doctor in the next page renders this reason for it, *That while there was no multitude of Chri-*

Dr. Ham. Annot. on Acts 11.6. which Mr. B. mistakes for Acts 11. 30.

Christians, there were found none among them that were fit to be constituted Presbyters (in our use of the word;) and therefore contented themselves with a Bishop onely, and a Deacon or Deacons to assist him; there being (saith he) then so small store out of which to take more, and so small need of ordaining more: Intimating that when the number of Christians encreased, and there was need of ordaining more, that Order should be set up in the Church, as it was soon after. So that his first conclusion from the Doctor's words, is very fallly infer'd.

The other thing that he infers from them is, That a Bishop had but one Church, or one Worshipping Assembly at once. *Ans.* Of which there is not one syllable in the Doctor's words; and how far it is from his meaning and opinion, will appear to any that will but turn over his *Annotations* to the page preliminary to *Titus*; where, from *Eusebius*, he affirms *Titus* to have been Bishop of the Churches of *Crete*; and from *St. Chrysostom*, that *Titus* had committed to him ἡλικανησος νησος, an intire Island. So his *Annotations* on *Tiw.* 1. 3. 15. and other places, shew how grossly he miscites the Doctor, and how fallly he asserts from him, That Episcopal Churches in Scripture-times were but single Congregations. And 'tis strange that *Mr. Baxter* should say that he knows no proof ever produced of Gods instituting Churches Provincial, Patriarchal, &c. since he himself hath produced such full and solid proof of it, and that but lately, as in his *Christian Directions*, part 7. p. 127. And N. 4. having proved the particular Orders of Presbyters and Deacons, he tells us, That besides those in the universal Church in the Apostles days, there were many general Officers under Christ, that had the care of governing and overseeing Churches up and down, and were fixed by stated Relation to none. Which shews; that beside the fixed Pastors and Deacons of every Church Congregational or Parochial, there was in the Apostles times a larger Episcopacy in Gods Church, and more general Officers and Overseers to preside and visite the Churches, like Colonels and chief Commanders in an Army, Officers different from the Captains and stated Officers of every single Company. Thus *Mr. Baxter*; and yet

now he never saw proof produced of Churches Provincial, Patriarchal, &c. divine institution. It hath been proved *ex abundanti* by Bishop Hall and others, particularly Dr. *Stillington*'s [*Unreasonableness of Separation*,] that Episcopacy is founded on no other than Scripture, Reason, Apostolick practice, and Antiquity : To which I adde but this, That the Apostles and Disciples were distinct Orders of Church-Officers, as is evident from that of *Judas*'s forfeiting his Bishoprick, and *Matthias* (according to the prediction of the Psalm) taking it up ; who being by lot declared to be his Successour, was accordingly advanced from the lower Order of Discipleship to that higher one of being an Apostle. According to which the Ancients used to compare the Episcopal Office to that of the Apostles, and the Presbyters Office to that of the Seventy, as Officers employed by and under Bishops.

And this name [*Apostle*] being at last thought too sacred, as being fit onely for such as had seen the Lord, and were (according to the import of the word) immediately sent by him ; therefore in the early times of Primitive Christianity this name Apostle was laid aside, and that of Bishop used in its stead ; implying the same duty and dignity, though not of person, yet of place, as that of Apostle : So that what the Apostles were in Christ's own time, that are Bishops ever since ; and what Rank the Seventy had in the Church in Christ's time, the same and no other our Ministers have now.

As for that trite one, of the names of *Bishop* and *Presbyter* being applied to the same persons, it doth no more argue every Presbyter to be a Bishop, than the King's being a Gentleman argues every Gentleman to be a King : For admit the names were used in common to both, yet where do we finde that the powers are exercised in common also ? That the Presbyter as well as Bishop, has *χρησμεύειν τῷ κλήρῳ*, the power of ordaining, inflicting Church-censures ? &c. The Councils of *Nice* and *Antioch* expressing a manifest distinction between Bishops and Presbyters, do declare the Disciplinary proceedings of Church-censures to be under the Bi-

Conc. Nic. c. 5.
Conc. Ant. c. 6.

shops ordering, and not the Presbyters. But in this I am prevented by that late excellent Treatise [*The Unreasonableness of Separation*]; onely let me observe Mr. Baxter's Argument against Episcopacy, *Plea*, p.17. Having worded it thus, *That Bishops cannot morally beget the Species of Presbyters*; he argues, *If Ecclesiastical Generation imitate Natural, then Bishops would beget but their like; men beget men, Physicians make Physicians, and so (says he) Bishops may beget Bishops.* *Answ.* As though Bishops should be consecrated in their Mothers womb, and Presbyters be ordained such before they were born; and as though they could not be Bishops or Presbyters *jure divino*, unless they were born such. This is (I think) the true import and force of his Argument; not much unlike to that of his Scotch-brother, who reading in *Genesis* the History of the Creation, concludes thus: *Here's not a word of Bishops of all that God made, therefore Bishops are not Jure divino.*

*The unchurching of
Tim. and Tit.
p. 1, 2, 3.*

Ejusdem Farina is that of Brother Prynne, who concludes *Timothy* to be no Bishop, 1. Because *St. Paul* and *St. Luke*, who were acquainted with him, never called him Bishop: 2. Because he was *St. Paul's* Associate and Fellow-traveller: 3. Because *St. Paul* calls him a Minister of God: 4. Because he was a young man. And I doubt not but Mr. Baxter's late Book against Episcopacy will appear altogether as futile and doubty, when it has had its due disquisition.

SECT. IV.

Mr. Baxter's Character of Bishops.

FROM Arguments, the Pleader proceeds to down-right reviling and railing Accusations, stiling the Bishops [*Plea*, 2 part, p.153. 160.] *Prigud Diotrephefes, and that it is the lordly, proud, and impatient spirits of the Pastors of the Church, that are the great disturbers and dividers of it;* maliciously hinting, 2 *Plea*,

p. 174, 175. *That there are some of our Bishops that scarce believe that there is a God, or a Life to come.* And in his Book of Concord, p. 122. he calls them, *The Military Instruments of the Devil.*

Concerning the latter of these, I shall onely say to the Pleader as *Michael* said to the Devil, *The Lord rebuke thee*, Jude 9. though the Apostle in the foregoing verse calls them, *Filthy dreamers that despise Dominion, and speak evil of Dignities*: he calls them, *Raging waves of the sea foaming out their own shame*, v. 13. *murmurers and complainers, whose mouths speak swelling words*, v. 16. *even they who separate themselves*, v. 19. As to the former part of his Railery, 'tis strange that he should call Bishops proud *Diotrepheses*, since according to that charge of St. *John* against *Diotrephes*, which he alludes to, *Joh. 9.* none can be called such but they who refuse the Authority of Bishops, prating against them maliciously; which was that St. *John* blamed *Diotrephes* for, in his loving to have the preheminance. But who are more likely the proud *Diotrephes*'s, they who teach and practise Obedience to their Rulers, according to Gods Word, or they who magisterially set up their own Domination, Judgment, and Will, as the Rule of Order, Unity, and Peace? [though in sinful opposition to their Rulers,] Princely prescribing to all Christian Churches the true and onely terms of Concord [as the Pleader in his *Plea's* and other Books hath done.] Who but a Pope or Scotch-*Archegus* could have dictated concerning the killing and deposing of Kings, as Mr. *Baxter* has done in his *H. Commonw. Thes.* 358. compared with 368. *If the King* (says he) *raise War against the Parliament upon their declaration of the dangers of the Commonwealth, in that case the people may not onely resist him* [i. e. fight against and kill him if they can] *but also* (saith he) *he ceases to be King.* Nay, let him strain the very Papal Tyranny to what pitch of Insolence and Imposition he pleases, there are Presbyterian Claims and Presidents will equal it. Witness that of their Brethren in *Scotland*, in and since King *James*'s time, [whose Discipline they would have had in *England*;] they vindicated to

themselves and their Consistory a sovereign, universal, and independent power in all things spiritual : They had not onely the Directive, but Legillative Power also ; and all temporal things *in ordine ad Spiritualia* came within the verge of their Scepter ; all Sovereign power had onely the Executive power of doing as they commanded, and was bound to preserve by its Power and Arms, their sacred Priviledges and Sovereignty : Whatever Laws enacted by King and Parliament they conceived to be against the Laws of Christ, [*i. e.* Presbytery in chief] the Presbyterian Ministers had power to repeal, and to discharge the Subjects from obeying. They might decree Laws of their own, not onely contrary to, but destructive of the Laws of the Land. The King was bound to keep their Laws, and put them in execution ; and if neither he nor his Council would do it, the Nobles and Commons, nay every individual person, was bound to do it at their direction : as may be seen in *Presbytery displayed*, A. Bishop *Bromhall* and others. This is that Presbytery which was in *Scotland*, and which Nonconformists would have had in *England*. What's there in Episcopal Jurisdiction, to this Presbyterian Insolence ? their power of citing before their Judicatory the King and his Family, of excommunicating him in case of non-appearance, their subjecting his earthly Scepter to theirs, which they called the *Scepter of Christ* ; in a word, his being forc'd to do whatever these Presbyterian Ministers enjoyned, was that which King *James* had the smart experience of ; and therefore in the Conference at *Hampton-Court*, p. 79. (saith the King) *A Scottish Presbytery as well agrees with Monarchy, as God and the Devil ; then Jack and Tom, and Will and Dick shall meet, and at their pleasure censure me and my Council and all my Proceedings ; then Tom shall stand up and say, It shall be thus ; Dick shall reply and say, It shall be thus : And therefore (says the King to Dr. Reynolds) till you find I grow pussie and lazie, I pray you, good Doctor, let Presbytery alone ; for if that be once up in England, I am sure it will keep me in breath.* The Patriarchal Presbyters among them were honoured and attended more like Kings or Princes, than Presbyters or Prelates.

In a word, such was the Domination and Lordly pride of the Nonconforming Brethren of *Scotland*, that 'tis certain no Bishop or Archbishop in *England*, *Scotland*, or *Ireland*, hath used more Authority, or Lorded it more arrogantly, than these Presbyterian pretenders to parity.

Consult who will Mr. *Baxter's* Writings, and he shall finde that *England* had never such an *Aristarchus*; the whole world had never such a Metropolitan, except the *Pope*, for Magisterial prescribing, insolent despising, and censuring even all the Christian Churches in the world, whose practices agree not with his capricious humour; is not he then a fit person to call the Bishops and Church-Governours lordly, impatient, and proud *Discrepases*? But 'tis no great marvel, upon this consideration, That were people brought to a due liking of Bishops, their beloved Separation could not be kept up: As

Conszen the Jesuit observed in these words:

How easie is it (said he) to bring the Puritans of England into Order and Unity with other Protestants, were they but brought to a liking of Bishops? And this railing against Bishops is that Seignior *Bellarini* advised, as one way for the best managing of the Popish Interest in *England*: *Let the Bishops (said he) be soundly aspersed, as factious on the one hand, as worldly and careless on the other; and that it were well if they were removed.*

His Directions for restoring of Popery, l 2. c. 18.

His Letter to Father Young.

SECT. V.

Mr. Baxter's Character of the Conforming Clergie.

THE Pleader having had this wrathful and malicious fling at the Bishops, see how like Ministers of the Gospel he accosts the inferiour Clergy, calling them craftily, *Raw Touths*; *their preaching, a saying over a pedantick lifeless Speech; and out of the Pulpit, little differing in speech or life from Carnal World-*

Worldlings, or formal Hypocrites, 1 Plea, p. 87. raw, cold, dry, scandalous Ministers, injudicious Novices, worldly Formalists, and Hypocrites : p. 231. He supposes some guilty of Heresie, Usurpation, Malignity, and Wickedness : p. 105. And the greater part of the Ministers of England to procure the liberty of their Ministry by sin, yea gross deliberate sin : p. 116. Ignorant Readers, unfit to be trusted with the care of Souls, for their unskillfulness, unsoundness, notorious sloth and negligence, and great aversness to a holy life, &c. Just as the old Nonconformists the Donatists reputed St. Austin, calling him a seducer, a deceiver of

*Possid. de vita Aug.
cap. 9.*

Souls, exclaiming against him publickly and privately, that he was a Wolf that should be slain for the preservation of the Flock; and all this because that holy man kept and defended the Communion of the Church, which those Schismatics rejected. The like usage had *Basil at Neocesarea, and Greg. Nazianzen at Constantinople.* And thus do the Papists at this day call all Hereticks beside themselves.

But what railing Quaker, what black-mouth'd Atheist or Schismatick whatever could say more? Yet this is *Nonconformists Plea for Peace.* The Pleader teaches [*Plea, p. 33.*] That Princes ought to preserve peace and charity among the Churches, and hinder Preachers from uncharitable reviling each other: Is this such reviling or no? In his Scripture-proof for *Infant Church-membership*, he teaches, *p. 148.* That sharp reproaching of Ministers is the common Character of all Schismatical Subverters of the Church: Is this sharp reproaching of Ministers or no? Who then are the Schismatical Subverters of the Church? He adds in the next words, They smite the Shepherds, that they might the easier scatter, [separate, and divide the Sheep] who teach people to scatter, separate, and divide: And to what else doth this smiting, slander, and reviling tend? Who sees not 'tis the Atheist's great endeavours to make the profession of the Ministry it self, the ground of its contempt; and the distinctive names of Ministers, the very Appellatives of scorn? So that to call a man a Priest, is (with some) to degrade him

him below his Servant. Is it not sad then that such an old carping Minister as Mr. *Baxter*, should so abet that rampant sin of the times, which the *Leviathan*-sinners so sport in? Not to say what the Pleader's designe in it is, had any man a mind to make Schisms in the Church, what better method could he use, than to vilifie the Teachers of it? None could make men Schismatics by perswading to Schism, so as people should perceive it; it must be done eruptly, by vilifying their Teachers, and representing them as such that the people may or ought to separate from. Suppose the Devil were incarnate and dwelt among us, I appeal to the Pleader, whether this would not be his main work and business, (*viz.*) to make the Ministry and preaching of the Gospel successeless to the good of Souls, And I appeal to any but the Pleader, whether any thing can be devised conducing more thereto, than vilifying the Ministers and Preachers of it, as the Pleader doth; and making them odious to the people all he can. What people, having any sence of Religion or the fear of God, would not separate from Ministers of such black Characters as the Pleader fixes on the Conforming Clergy? I shall end this with those words of Mr. *Baxter* in 24th *Thes.* of *H. Commonw.* *It is necessary* (said he) *to the Churches peace, that no Pastors or Christians be suffered in Print or Speech to rail at one another, and use contentions or opprobrious words:--- And that tolerated Churches be not suffered to cast scorn upon the approved Churches, nor be over-busie or publick in drawing away others to their mind.* He adds, *If men for foul words are bound to their behaviour, and women for scolding be put in the Gumble-stool; there's no reason men should be suffered to rail on pretence of their opinions in Religion.* Thus Mr. *Baxter*: Yet he allows himself such railing in his opinions of Religion, that no Mother *Celiars*, *Hobbes*, *White*, or *Whitebread*, would exceed. But this is just that which *Contzen* the Jesuit advised in order to the promoting of Popery in England, to vilifie the Ministers: *For* (saith he, *Cont.* 1. 2. c. 18.) *he that shall read the Writings of Lutherans against Calvinists, and Calvinists against Lutherans [much more of Nonconformists against Conformists] will think*
he

he reads not the *Invectives* of men against men, but the *Furies* and *Roarings* of Devils against Devils: And hence in time (saith he) the very Rulers themselves will take occasion to change their Religion.

It was on this same account that *Ursin* gave *Flacius Illyricus* this Character, [*Pres. in Apol. Cat.*] That he was one who for divers years, by his discrediting Worthy and Orthodox men, and by stirring up unnecessary contentions, was a troubler of divers Consciences and Churches all over Germany. [As I wish Mr. Baxter be not all over England.]

SECT. VI.

Mr. Baxter's Character of Nonconformists.

BUT are there none of this black Character among Nonconformists? are no raw, cold, injudicious Novices, &c. among them? No, they are hinted to be clear, serious, holy, diligent Preachers, *Plea*, I. p. 87. Judicious, convincing, affectionate Ministers, p. 231. And in his second *Plea* 'tis totidem verbis, Under all the Heavens of God, there's no one party of Ministers or People more able, holy, wise, and faithful, than those that are now silenced, and reproached as Puritans in his Majesties Dominions; and that they are the glory of the Churches, and of the King and Kingdom, and such as no Prince in the world is equally blest with.

Thus, like the people of *China*, they fancy themselves to have two eyes, and almost all the world beside to be blind. But,

1. This uncharitable boast doth ill become such holy, judicious, &c.

2. This is no more than what the *Pharisees* of old, the *Anabaptists* and *Quakers* of late have opinioned of themselves: The Order of *Jesuits* in the Church of *Rome*, have stiled themselves the *Sainthly Brotherhood*; and 'tis certain that many *Quakers* excel them in their affected Gravity, many *Anabaptists* in Piety, the

the Prelates in Learning and preaching, and some Jesuits in all four. But,

3. Who will regard this Thraasonism, this boasting humour, since 'tis that which the Holy Ghost hath so plainly foretold and condemn'd, *That in the latter days perilous times should come, when men should be lovers of themselves, boasters, proud, false accusers, fierce, despisers of them that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded.*---From such turn away, 2 Tim. 3. 2.

4. As for their Character of Holiness he gives them, observe who will their Carriage and Conversation, and he shall find but few things in them excelling Conformists, except their looking disdainfully, walking and talking demurely, as those of their predecessors in the 23 Mat. 14. 9 Mat. 11. 26 Act. 5. boasting and conceiting of themselves above others; avoiding the company of such as they think worse than themselves; of being of the strictest Sect or profession in Religion; their straining at a Gnat, as the Pleader doth about *Christmas*-day, when such camels as Perjury, Sacrilege, and Disobedience to Magistrates, will down well enough; their starchy Conversation, supercilious and contemptuous Carriage towards all that are not of their Opinion in Religion, insomuch that one that never saw their faces before, may discern them, for the most part, from any sort of people in *England*, except Quakers onely.

5. As for the commendation he gives of their Ability [or Learning] however they now arrogate the reputation of it, it is not long since Learning was judged by some of them to unqualifie men for approbation to the Ministry; Parts and Abilities were reputed Qualities no way Ministerial: While Friends and Faction, well-meaning and little understanding, have been Accomplishments beyond Study and University; when humane Learning (as one observes) hath been scott at as vain Philosophy, and the enticing words of man: and under the notion of the foolishness of preaching, the simplicity of the Gospel, &c. Ignorance hath got the stamp of *Jus Divinum*, and natural Weakness has past for supernatural Grace. But,

6. There's none questions the Pleaders abilities; he's able to
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divide the Church into *species semper divisibiles*, into nothing, and (as a Nonconformist said of him) to distinguish himself into a Fart. How many Nonconformists in *England* beside himself, could in the twenty years study he speaks of, finde out so many feeble Exceptions as he hath done, whereby to amuse and ensnare the Rabble in the opinion of the sinfulness of Conformity? And there are among them (no doubt) men of great Learning and Abilities, as he says; but allowing for the disproportion of number between them and Conformists, and 'tis certain there will be found among them more *Grossum-caputs* by far, than the Church of *England* will own. I know one of them that (because he was generally reputed one of the ablest) I shall here make this mention of: In a considerable Company disputing with his Parish-Minister fiercely against Ceremonies, and particularly kneeling, being sufficiently baffled, rose from his seat, and with eyes and hands lift up, gave God thanks that he was none of the Disputers of this world; which was judged by his Party a sufficient Confutation of the Adversary, and Denomination of an *able* man: And taking their Abilities by such measures as these, they are all acknowledged (as the Pleader calls them) *able* men. But admit they were indeed men of better learning, preaching, and living, (as they are not;) 'tis certain, no Heresie or Schism in the Church, no Sedition or Rebellion in the State, could be carried on but by such men, who by a demure conversation and tolerable parts, are able to inflame the people with unreasonable Zeal, to sanctifie politick Villany, and put a varnish of Religion on the blackest designs. Schismatics had always this to say for themselves; The Donatists and Novatians were purer than others, and therefore separated from the ordinary Christian-Assemblies; *Arrius*, who denied the Divinity of Christ, was looked upon as a man of good learning and life: but were these men ever the less Schismatics for their great Learning and plausible Conversations? no, but much worse.

As for their Preaching he so commends, there are no doubt many among them of great Dexterity and Skill, otherwise how could

could they keep up their Separation? But 1. Are there not such among Conformists? 2. Are there not many of the Nonconformists much followed, who have nothing whereon to fix that Character but twang and tautology, noise, hum and haw, schreeching and bawling like *Baal's* Priests, as though God were no neerer them than the visible Heavens? And here let not the Pleader think that I speak of all of them, or that I undervalue, much less deride serious and affectionate preaching; for I have as great a veneration for it as himself: and were there a real distinction between affectionate preaching, which Nonconformists so affect, and rational convincing preaching, which Conformists so excel in, I had rather hear one Sermon of the former kind, than two of the latter.

As for his stiling Nonconformists *the glory of the Churches, of the King and Kingdom, and such Ministers as no Prince in the world is equally blest with*; I say but this: Then they are much mended, since it was used to be disputed, whether the Jesuits or Puritans were like to prove more pernicious and dangerous to the Commonwealth, where both or either of them lived. *Vid. Watson's Quodlibet, 2 Art. 1.* And since the Lord Keeper *Puckering* proposed the same thing to the Parliament, delivering to them *Queen Elizabeth's* Command, *That they hearken not to the solicitations of those called Puritans, who (said she) do nothing but disturb the Peace and good Repose of Church and Commonwealth.* And concerning the same persons, *Dr. John Burges* in his *Rejoynder*, p. 629. observes, *That as under the Name of Christ, and pretence of advancing his Kingdom, Antichrist was set up: so under the name of Antichrist, and pretence of onely opposing him, the Kingdom of Christ may be pulled down, and in part already is (says he) and men scarcely feel or fear it.* And 'tis observed out of *Bishop Bancroft*, that he long since foretold, *That the Puritans would never give over their clamour for Reformation, till they had utterly ruined the whole Kingdom and Church, if they were not timely suppressed:* Adding that of *Liuy*, *Urgentibus Rempubl. fatis, Dei & hominum salutare admonitiones sper-*

The Apol. for Bishops voting in Parliament, p. 73.

nuntur. And though the Nonconformists are (as I really believe) irreconcilable haters of Popery, yet if Bishop *Whitgift* or Dr. *Oates* be to be believed, 'tis certain they contribute their endeavours to the bringing in of Popery, though they are not aware of it. The Bishop affirms [in his Letter to the Lord Treasurer, in *Fuller*,] *That to his certain knowledge, the Dissenters were animated to Nonconformity by the Jesuits.* And Dr. *Oates* in his Narrative, *Item 1. That the Rebellion in Scotland of the Presbyterians against the Episcopal Government, was contrived by the Jesuits; Wright, Morgan, Ireland, and others, being instructed to preach under the notion of Presbyterians, and to inform the Scots of the sad estate they were in by reason of Episcopal Tyranny exercised over them.* *Item 11. That the Jesuits in Scotland had stirr'd up the Presbyterians there to a Rebellion.* *Item 43. tells us, That Messengers were sent into Scotland with instructions to carry themselves like Nonconformists, and to preach to the disaffected Scots the necessity of taking up the Sword for the defence of Liberty of Conscience.* So that what the Jesuits did in Scotland in carrying on the Plot, was under the disguise of Nonconformists. And *Item 73. That there were eight thousand Catholics ready to rise and joyn with the disaffected Scots, when required by the Scotch Jesuits so to do.* So *Item 25. 51. & passim,* Shewing, that though the Nonconformists mean no such thing, but are really irreconcilable Enemies to Popery, yet they as really are instrumental to Jesuits in bringing of it in; and it's evident that they are the avowed Enemies of the Protestant Religion as now established by Law, which the Popish Plotters do so oppose and hate. And Mr. *Baxter* himself saith, *That the Papists account that if the Puritans prevail, they shall make great advantage of it, their being unsettled and all in pieces, giving them footing for continual attempts; and that having their Party secretly among Puritans, is the way to be sure to maintain their interest.* Thus Mr. *Baxter*: Yet these Puritans are stiled, *The glory of the Churches, of the King and Kingdom, and such as no Prince in the world is equally blest with.* But I wish they deserved indeed the Character here given

given them ; for I am sure, that the more holy, wise, and able judicious they are, the more quiet and peaceable they will live, and the more obedient to their Governours ; especially at such a time as this, when Disobedience and Division [that are always dangerous] do threaten most perniciously the Church and State : and therefore the turbulent and wrathful revilers of Ministers and Government, the peevish, censorious, and false accusers, are certainly none of these.

SECT. VII.

Nonconformists charging the Parliament with the burning of London.

AMong all the dirt thrown in the face of Authority, he hath no such malicious sling as that at the Parliament, charging them with their making the *Oxford-Act*, as that horrid and crying sin for which God inflicted that dreadful Judgment the *Burning of London*, p. 238. And that the Bishops may be sure to be taken notice of, he words it thus ; *The Parliament and Bishops* : as though the Bishops were no part of the Parliament. And all this in the greatest capital letters, to signify the notoriety of it.

But were Mr. *Baxter* an unprejudiced and impartial, and not a passionate and spiteful interpreter of Providences, he might have thought of many other more crying sins, as more probable procatacticks to ascribe that Judgment to. We want not sins National [of so deep a tincture of Hell, and so complicated a sinfulness as to contain in them the violation of all Laws Divine and Humane, the boldest transgression of the plainest Rules of Duty, the down-right renouncing Christianity it self] to ascribe such Judgments to : As, 1. The Murder of the late King, a stain that like *Cain's* brand, will stick by us as long as we are a Nation. What can we think of that Crime that doth at once (as one speaks) hamstring the State, and cut the pipes of Justice ;

ftice ; wrap up all in a wilde Confusion, and ruine whole Societies of men ; murder the Father of the Country, Gods Vicegerent, and that in a formal way of Justice, thereby running Justice through as with her own Sword ? and all this in open Rebellion, which is as the sin of Witchcraft, 1 *Sam.* 15. 23. *i. e.* diabolical, and scarce ever repented of ; not onely contrary to the Rules of Scripture and the Laws of Nature, but also contrary to many sacred Oaths and Promises, the most solemn Obligations that can be fastened on the Consciences of men. Such a heinous crying sin as this, is like enough to call for Vengeance, to bring a Curse upon the Nation, and make the Land like an *Akeldama*, yea a *Maranatha*, scarce to be expiated without a total Excision and final Extirpation. Nor is the distance of time between the Sin and the Judgment, any thing to the contrary : for such Crimson-daring sins are usually punished at a distance. It was forty years after the murder of the holy Jesus, ere the Vengeance threatned for it came upon the Jewish Nation. 2. Or it might have been more religiously ascribed to what Mr. *Baxter* speaks, *Of the Devils stigmatizing the Nation with the brand of PER,* and of the *Lands mourning for Oaths broken*: Which is probable enough. But who are the Oath-breakers ? they who renounce the Solemn League and Covenant, a thing which if 'twere binding, would make Rebellion and Perjury it self matters of duty ; or those Ministers in Forty three who sent away their Congregations with full discharge from the bonds of the Oath of Allegiance to war against their King, by the Solemn League and Covenant, and after that the Engagement ; a thing as contrary to the Covenant, as the Covenant was to their Oaths of Allegiance and Canonical Obedience ; and after that their homaging to *Cromwel* in a way and manner almost as contrary to their Engagement, as that was to any of their former Oaths : so that they were shod round with Perjury, who now so stick at one Remove. Such was the compass of their religious swallow, all Oaths could down with them, but none could hold them. No marvel then (as Mr. *Baxter* saith) if for Oaths broken the Land mourns. And to ascribe that direful Conflagration, the burning

of London, to such crying sins, were a far more religious interpretation of Gods Providence and Judgments, than to ascribe it to an Act of Parliament that designed nothing but the good of the Kingdom, the peace and security of Church and State. To which I might adde, 3. The Bloud of those many Christians shed in the Civil War; all which the very Laws of the Land make Murder: For to kill any man in War, without Authority derived from him or them that have legal power to make War, is Murder. And that they who made the War had no Authority so to do, is evident from that 25 *Edm.* 3. c. 2. which makes it Treason to levy War against the King in his Realm, or to be adherent to the Kings Enemies in his Realm, giving them aid or comfort in the Realm or elsewhere. Many other National and crying sins may be named, whereto we may aptly and piously ascribe this dreadful Judgment, and not thus spitefully to an Act of Parliament designing nothing but the good of the Kingdom.

SECT. VIII.

Nonconformist Persecution.

HIS Book doth abound with loud Outcries of *Persecution, the loss of their Maintenance, the ruine of their Estates and Health*, p. 234. He scatters up and down his *Plea* frequent complaints of *Goals, Starving, Ruine, Death, bloody Persecution*, &c. as though he were in any Turkish Slavery or Popish Inquisition. And what doth all this tend to, but to enrage the People, and to bring an *Odium* on the Conforming Clergy? For Mr. Baxter tells us in his Preface to *Cath. Theolog.* *That godly people will follow their suffering Teachers, and that their sufferings will stir up in the people a passionate Zeal, which will make the people pray for the downfal of that Clergie* [Prognost. p. 14.] *as the Enemies of God and Godliness; and that it will make some of the Nonconformists think* [p. 20.] *these passions of the people*

people needful to check the fierceness of the Afflictors, and therefore will let them alone. And some of the more injudicious and hot-brained of the Nonconformists (as he styles them) will put the people on, and make them believe that all Communion with Conforming Ministers or Parish-Churches, is unlawful, and their forms of Worship sinful and Antichristian; and that they are Temporizers, and betrayers of Purity, that communicate or assemble with them. These and the like effects, Mr. Baxter saith, the sufferings of the Nonconforming Ministers will have.

Who then will wonder at their noise of Persecution, or question their ugly meaning of crying out of it at such a time as this, when they have the Liberty and Indulgence which not long since was all that they pretended to desire; when the Penal Laws are like to be taken off, and a door of not onely Toleration, but Comprehension open; which (it is believed) will produce no other discovery than this, How fond they are of their [truly so called] beloved Separation, notwithstanding all their clamours of Persecution.

But how are they persecuted? Why, 1. They vilifie and reproach their Governours at their pleasure, who yet let them alone, and pass it by *impune*. 2. They have bound themselves by a rebellious *Covenant*, to endeavour the extirpation of our Church-government; which they adhere to, and refuse to renounce, notwithstanding its complicated sinfulness; and so declare themselves to be such Enemies to their Governours and Government, as want but opportunity and power to act (according to their League and Covenant) the Overthrow of it and them: for which reason their Governours knowing their Enmity to their Government, think them not fit to be trusted with places of Ministerial Authority and Preferment, upon their own seditious and pernicious terms. And this is that the Pleader calls *Persecution, the loss of their Maintenance, the ruine of their Estates, &c.*

In the Primitive Church, when the Christians dwelt among Heathens, there came a Maid from her Fathers house to one of the Heathen Tribunals, and without any Call to it, declared her
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self a Christian, spit in the Judges face, and so provoked him to cause her to be executed. Will any say this was to suffer Persecution? So these third *Cato's* of the Nonconformity load their Governours with Reproaches, calling them to their faces, Lordly, proud, and tyrannical Thorns and Thistles, the military Ministers of the Devil, &c. For all this provocation, they are suffered to preach openly, and to be well paid privately, to act freely, and to enjoy plenteously all that they desired (not long since) to enjoy. Few of them but have plentiful Maintenance; some, that beside their Contribution of thirty or forty pounds *per Annum*, have lodged themselves eruptly as Chaplains to Persons of Quality; where they are attended and honoured like any Scotch *Ministers*, set at the Table by my Lady, when the poor Parish-Curate is set below the Candlestick. I know in my Country here in *Worcestershire* about ten of them, and I believe the County hath not many more, most of which I am well assured hath more for his Maintenance than ever my self had from the Church, who have lived a Minister of it almost these eight years: Yet these are those querulous and discontented Creatures, those poor gentle Lambs, that are still bleating out Persecution and Tyranny.

Had the Loyalists been but half so favourably used by Nonconformists, during the time of their Usurpation and Tyranny, as Nonconformists are now by them, they would never have been so ungratefully querulous: 'Tis well known how they turned almost all out of their Livings, that adhered to their lawful Sovereign; sent them with their Wives and Families a begging, who durst not prostitute their Consciences with downright Perjury, and having sworn Canonical Obedience, durst not by a contrary Oath transgress at once the Laws of God, Nature, and Nations. They obtained that Order from a bloudy Usurper, that every Episcopal Divine should not onely be uncapable of a Benefice, but also to exercise any act of Ministerial Function; nor yet be suffered to get some little subsistence by teaching School; no, nor at last to live in any Gentlemans house, who out of pity might take him in to keep him from
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starving. Whether this, or the present case of the Nonconformists, be more like Persecution, let any but a Nonconformist judge. Read who will, the Principles and Practices of the Nonconformist Brethren in *Scotland*, and he shall find (as one observes) that where they have the Power, their little finger is heavier than the hand and loins of a Bishop, or Episcopal Governour: The authority of their Courts Ecclesiastical was more tyrannically exercised over not onely the Bodies and Estates, but also the Souls and Consciences of men, than ever was that of the Popish Inquisition: e.g. *If after a little time granted for information, any refuse to conform and subscribe to their Confession of Faith, their Rule of Government, their manner of Worship, he is forthwith excommunicate, yea though his dissent from them be but in a Theological Tenet, [which they frequently called Heresie ;] after which Excommunication, upon the remonstrance of a Commissioner from the Presbytery to the Civil Judge, there is a Warrant from Supreme Authority given out to command him to conform, or within few days to be put to the Horn, i. e. to be outlawed: The tender Conscience not conforming, the outlawed's Estate and Movables [i. e. his Chattels] becomes forfeited to the King: If within a year and a day he gives not Obedience and Conformity, his whole Revenues and Rents of immovable Goods are forfeited to the King during his life. Here the man is stript of all his Estate movable or immovable; yet this is not all, but still upon Remonstrance of the Presbytery's Commissioner, another Letter goes out, which they call a Letter of Caption [like that of our Writ de Excommunicato capiendo] which is to secure his Person, and commit him to close Prison as a Rebel. If he skulk or hide himself, out goes a Writ called Letters of Intercommuning, which forbids all the Kings Subjects to commune or confer with him personally or by Letter, upon pain of being accounted a Rebel of the same guilt. And if the Church requires all this of the Civil Magistrate [for so they call the Sovereignty] he is bound to obey them.*

Now say who will if this be not in many respects as bad as the Popish Inquisition, when a man shall be brought to all this for

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Nonconformity, though but in a Theological Tenet. What are our Penal Laws on peevish Dissenters, compared with such Presbyterian Tyranny? We desire them but to renounce a perjurious Combination, called [*Solemn League and Covenant*,] an Oath taken contradictory to a former; which if it binde the Conscience, a man may be bound in Conscience to steal, rebel, murder, or any thing; he has no more to do but swear, and he is bound in Conscience to do it: an Oath which some Nonconformists have called a very Nest of Villany, and such (said one of them) that no person or people fearing God ever took. We desire them but to subscribe and conform to such Church-Discipline and Order as many of themselves have acquitted from all intrinsic sinfulness, and (I think I may adde) such as onely can comport with the present Government of State. In case of Nonconformity hereto, the penalty is, to some advantageous, to all easie and tolerable. And what's this to Scotch Church-tyranny over Soul, Body, and Estate, for dissenting but in a Theological Tenet, which the Presbyterian Ministers would have had brought into *England*; or to that Cruelty which they exercised on the Loyalists when in their usurpt power?

But to end this, let me bespeak the Nonconformists in the words of the Independents to the Presbyterians, in a thing printed 1648, called [*The Pulpit-Incendiary*] directed against Mr. Calamy, Case, Cranford, and others, p. 45. the words are these: *You complain of your misery and bondage, sorrows and oppressions, and troubles of the Church; [i. e. the Presbyterian Church] What ails you? what troubles you? who oppresses you? where is the least shew of oppression, or cause of complaint minister'd to you, except it be because you are not suffer'd to oppress your Brethren? Can you feed upon nothing but Blood, yea, the blood of your Brethren, that though you have every thing else, you so complain of sorrow and oppression? Is this your sorrow and oppression, that you cannot oppress? Thus the Independent to the Presbyterian, i. e. Nonconformists to one another in 48. And 'tis even so with Nonconformists still. This is their Persecution, that they cannot persecute; this is their Suffering,*

fering, that they are not suffer'd to domineer : So certain it is, that nothing but governing will satisfie them, let them pretend what they will.

SECT. IX.

Nonconformist · Loyalty.

HIS seventh *sect.* from p. 120. to p. 140. gives in a List of some few harmless Transactions relating to the late Civil War, whereby he would betray his Reader into an opinion of Nonconformists innocence, *And that they were no promoters of the Civil War, nor had any hand in the Kings death, insinuating that they wrote and preacht against it ; (p. 130, 132.) that they were of those that restored the King.* Nor do they stick to tell the world, *That no people in the world have better principles of Loyalty and Obedience than they.* Thus will they tell the Sun 'tis midnight, and yet be believed by their credulous Followers. But this hath had its full confutation by the Impleader, who hath made their guilt evidently to appear as much notorious to be denied, as it is impious to be defended : and therefore I should pass it by. But seeing, 1. that notwithstanding all that can be said, the belief of their innocence in this matter gets ground daily ; and 2. that their *Pleas for Peace, Way of Concord, Melius Inquirendums, &c.* are of the same tendency as those Paper-scurfles that began the Civil War : Seeing these things, I think he doth a good office who at any time endeavours the undeceiving of Posterity in such a matter as this is, and gives the world what warning he can of those Wolves in Sheeps cloathing, that so worried Church and State into their wild and ruining confusions ; though he do no more but make more publick what is published already of those seditious Invectives against the King, and Incitements to Rebellion, which the Nonconformists Pulpits flamed with, venting not onely from Pulpit but Press, their rebellious Doctrines as religious Maximes, like Razors set with
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oyl (said one) to cut the throat of Majesty with their smooth keennels.

I begin with Mr. Baxter, H. Commonw. *Thef.* 358. compar'd with 369. *If the King* (says he) *raise war against the Parliament, upon their declaration of the dangers of the Commonwealth-----in that case the King may not onely be resisted [i. e. fought against, kill'd] but he ceaseth to be King.* Yet speaking of the Governours then in being, who by Rebellion and Perjury had usurpt Supremacy, *Pref. to H. Commonw.* he saith, *They were the best Governours in the world, and such as Subjects are forbid to depose, on pain of damnation.* In his *Preface to H. Commonw.* p. 23. he speaks it like a Challenge to the whole world, *That if any man can prove that the King was the highest Power in the time of those Divisions, and that he had power to make that War which he made, he will offer his head [he means, his neck] to Justice as a Rebel.*

Though St. Peter saith, the King is Supream.

[So that every one taking the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy Mr. Baxter condemns for Perjury.] He tells us in *H. Commonw.* p. 486. *That he having often searched his own heart whether he did lawfully engage in the War or not, and encourage so many thousands to it, that the issue of all his search was this-----That he cannot see that he was mistaken in the main, nor dares he repent of it, nor forbear doing the same, if it were to do again in the same state of things.* He says indeed in the same place, *That if he could be convinced that he had sinn'd in that matter, he would as gladly make publick recantation, as he would eat or drink;* which he never did yet: And therefore is still of the same mind, and would on the same occasion do the same things, *i. e.* fight and encourage so many thousands to fight against the King.

Mr. Calamy, in a Sermon before the House of Lords, on Christmas-day, 1644. p. 29. *That 'tis commendable to fight for Peace and Reformation against the Kings commands:* p. 9. *And that all that fought under the Kings Banner against the Parliament, fought themselves into slavery, and did endeavour by all bloody means to subvert Religion and Liberty:* p. 12. *And that*
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the King that should have been a Head of Gold, was an Iron Head to crush his own body in pieces : p. 18. That those that made their peace with the King at Oxford, were the Judas's of England ; and it were just with God to give them their portions with Judas : p. 13. That those that engaged in this Cause [i.e. the War against the King] and the Covenant, were unjustly charged with Rebellion : p. 38. That it was Gods Cause, and it should at last prevail, And in his Speech at Guild-hall, Oct. 6. 1643. That this Cause was every way so just and good, that if he had as many lives as he hath hairs of his head, he would be willing to sacrifice them all in that Cause, i.e. the War against the King.

So Mr. Case, in his Sermon before the House of Commons, on Ezek. 20. 25. Epist. Dedic. Ye [i.e. the Parliament] have overcome the Lion and the Bear, why may ye not overcome this uncircumcised Philistine, who hath not ceased to blaspheme the Armies of the living God ? Behold HE lies groveling at your feet ! what doth there remain but CUTTING OFF HIS HEAD ? And in his Sermon on Ezra 10. 2. How hath the preaching of Christ scorched those Cathedral Priests, the unhallowed Generation of Scribes and Pharisees, and perfected their Rebellion into that unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost ? Mr. Case on Dan. 11. 32. before the House of Commons, Cursed be he that holdeth his Sword from Bloud, that spares when the Lord says strike, p. 24. that suffers those to escape whom God hath appointed to destruction. In a Sermon on Isai. 43. 4. What a sad thing is it (my Brethren) to see our King in the head of an Army of Babylonians, refusing to be called the King of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and chusing rather to be called the King of Babylon ! Again, p. 18. Prelacy and Prelatick Clergie, Priests and Jesuits, Ceremonies and Service-book, were mighty Impediments in the way of Reformation, and God hath mightily pull'd them down. Preaching to a Court-Martial on 2 Chron. 19. 6. You know (says he) how the Midianites [i.e. the King and his Party] with whom you have to do, have vext you with their Wiles, and laboured to obstruct and cut us all off in our passage to the Land of Promise ; that blessed Reformation which the Parliament consult for,
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Assemblies dispute for, Armies fight for, and all good Christians pray for; therefore do you honour God in avenging your Brethren on those Midianites, in doing execution on those Enemies of Christ and the Kingdom. And in his Book of the Covenant, delivered in three Sermons, He that hath been a Malignant or Neutral, let him be so no more; for I protest against every man that after his striking this solemn Covenant with God, shall dare to persist in any of these mentioned Abominations; [i. e. adhering to the King, Ceremonies, &c.] he is an Enemy to Christ, a Traitor to the Kingdom, a State-murderer, a destroyer of himself and his Posterity, &c.

Mr. Herle in his Sermon before the House of Commons, on 1 King. 22. 22. p. 28. *If the Devil can but get a Prophet to leave Gods service for the Kings, he hath taken a Blue already, and is ready for as deep a Black as Hell can give him.*

There may be produced many thousand instances of the like, shewing how active they were in, and how far contributing to, the late Civil War, and consequently the Murder of the King. And thus they whose first Institution made them Messengers of glad tidings between God and his People, have made themselves Heralds to denounce war between Gods Vicegerent and his Subjects; and that not onely by casting a slur upon the King, and representing him as unworthy to be King, but by clamouring against Bishops and Ceremonies, as the blinde brood of Antichrist, Popish trash and trumpery, &c. Which same method is just now reviving; I pray God prevent the same sad consequents and effects. But notwithstanding all this, they still out-face the Sun, and say, [as the Pleader doth] That they preacht and wrote against the War and Regicide, and that they were of those who restored the King: But alas, when?

Mr. Blair, Mr. Jenkins.

-----*Galeatos serò duelli, pœnituit.*

When the Independents had rode them like fools, they were
glad

glad to part Stakes. 'Tis certain these Presbyterians never attempted the Kings restoring, till they were visibly in the very jaws of the Phanaticks, that would suffer them to domineer no longer; but were then seizing on their Tithes and Churches, the last morsel of their Spiritual Revenues: So that (as one said) if the Tithe-pig had not cry'd louder in their ears than either their Conscience or the Word of God, they had not been awakened to attempt it.

Mr. *Baxter* objects, That it was not the Presbyterian, but a rude conquering Army that put the King to death. *Answ.* A rude conquering Army were the immediate Agents, but who empower'd them to do it? those Under-parties and inferiour Sects. How broke they in upon us, but at the Schism and breach that Presbyterians first made? This point of Nonconformists guilt, as to the promoting of the War and the Kings death, may be cleared from other Topicks, as the Covenant, &c. But *hanc movere nolo Camerinam.*

In asserting Nonconformist Loyalty, Mr. *Baxter* proceeds to tell us, p. 30. *That Princes and Rulers may forbid--all that preach Rebellion or Sedition, that propagate such wicked Doctrine, and that they may punish them that do it: p. 247. And that they shall never be against making the strictest Laws to punish Nonconformists that shall be proved guilty of Sedition or disloyalty, &c.* *Answ.* Not to call Nonconformists disloyal or seditious, I leave to the Readers judgment these things following; which Mr. *Baxter* in his first Plea speaks not as his own onely, but as the sentiment of his whole Party. He teaches, p. 226. *That Pastors preached against the will of Princes for three hundred years, and after that against the will of Christian Princes.* And p. 26. *That God hath wrought Miracles to justify those that would not cease preaching, when Princes, yea Christian Princes have forbid them: Particularly the Bishops of Africa, who for preaching when the King forbid them, had their tongues cut out by the Kings command, and yet spake freely after their tongues were cut out.* Where though he call them Christian Princes, yet all that he alledges for it, proves no such thing, but that those Princes were

all *Arrians*, or usurping Conquerours. Is this disloyal and seditious or not, to argue the duty of Nonconformists preaching in disobedience to Christian Princes, and in spite of their Laws, from Ministers disobeying such Usurpers and *Arrians* as he instances in *Valens*, *Constantius*, &c. that because *Athanasius*, *Basil*, and *Miletius* preached notwithstanding the prohibition of Arrian Princes, that therefore Nonconformists of *England* must, notwithstanding the Interdict of the King? What doth this argue, unless the King and Clergy of *England* were Usurpers that had not the power of forbidding them to preach, or *Arrians* that would not suffer any Ministers to preach Christ? Again he tells us, p. 225. *That Papal Usurpations, and imposing of things unnecessary as necessary to Union and Communion, hath been the great cause of Schisms throughout the Christian world for this thousand years. And p. 226. that they who still obey such dividing Imposers, do continue Schisms in the Church by encouraging the causes of them.* Where by [dividing Imposers] we must understand the King, Parliament, and Clergy of *England*; for who else can he pretend to say imposes upon them? And if no body imposeth on them, why doth he clamour and complain of dividing Imposers? What mean those black Characters he gives the conforming Clergy of *England*, of deliberately perjured persons, and a hundred the like? What People fearing God would not abhor such a Ministry, and in spite of all lawful Authority, fight and die, do and suffer any thing, rather than hazard their Souls in trusting them to the care and conduct of such Ministers? Interpret who will, his meaning, in suggesting it as the opinion of some Casuists, *That Humane Laws bind not, when they are not for the common good*, [of which good the people must be judge;] Adding, *That he had rather say, When they are notoriously against the Laws of Christ, and the common good*; intimating the Laws of *England* to be such: for what Laws else are they concern'd with? Had Mr. Baxter a mind to preach Sedition, what would he say more? None that designe Sedition, will teach it openly and *in terminis*; that will not take: It must be done insinuatingly and disguisedly, as ----- &c.

Yet Mr. *Baxter*, in the name of the rest of the Nonconformists, would have Princes forbid and punish all that propagate seditious and disloyal Doctrine; and would have the strictest Laws made to punish any Nonconformists that shall be proved guilty of Sedition or Disloyalty.

SECT. X.

Kneeling.

A Nother Scruple of the Pleaders which the Impleader hath past by, is kneeling at the Sacrament: And of all the ugly Pimples that flush in the face of Nonconformist Churches, there's none looks worse than this, upon the account of that great breach that of it self it makes in Church-Communion; the Word and Sacrament being the two principal materials of Church-Communion. And for this he urges nothing but the old Cant, in four particulars.

First, Sitting being the Table-gesture, *Sitting as men do at Meat* (saith he, p. 150.) *is certainly lawful.*

Ans. As though the Lords Supper were a common Feast, and the administration of it to be guided by the Rules of common Table-fellowship; and if so, why do not Dissenters receive it with their Hats on? for that is as correspondent to the ordinary Table-gesture as sitting is.

Secondly, He urges the Example of Christ. Whereas,

1. 'Tis not certain what gesture Christ used: All that we read of it is, that he did eat the Passover with his Disciples in a tricliniary gesture, which we now express by sitting: Whereas,

Luke 22. 14, 15, 20.
John 21. 20.

Buxt. Syn. Judaic.
cap. 13.

1. It was the ordinary custom of the Jews to change their gesture, even during the Passover it self; whereas the Sacrament was *passim* to be observed, says the Text, *Luke 22. 20.* Beside, 'tis nowhere said, that Christ and his Disciples continued in the Table gesture at the blessing of the Holy Supper.

2. There's

2. There's the same reason for our imitation of Christ in one circumstance as well as another ; and so if we must imitate Christ at the Sacrament in Gesture, why not in Time and Place also ? and so as Christ did in an upper-room after Supper, &c. But,

3. If we must imitate Christ's practice herein, we must receive it kneeling, *i. e.* in conformity to the custom of the Church where we live ; so did Christ and his Apostles, they received the Passover in that Gesture which was then in use in the Jewish Church.

Thirdly, A third thing he urges against kneeling [which I believe is as much against his own knowledge] is the custom of the Church Catholick, and the Canons of general Councils, particularly *Nice*, 1 *Can.* 20. that prohibiteth Adoration on any Lords-day in the year.

Ans. Though Mr. *Baxter* alledge this to amuse his Followers, yet he knows,

1. That that same Council which forbad Genuflexion, did require standing, and not sitting. And,

2. That that injunction of the Church was onely to signifie their belief and joy concerning their own and Christ's Resurrection, and not to continue in the Church after the Resurrection was sufficiently believed ; for if it were still binding, we must receive the Sacrament standing, and not sitting or kneeling. But,

3. Admit that the Primitive Christians did receive the Sacrament kneeling [which they did not] yet that would not prove kneeling unlawful upon this account, because the Church is not bound to observe always the same indifferent Rites and Gestures : for though Christ and his Apostles sate when they taught the people, *Act.* 16. 13. yet all Ministers are not bound thereby to the same Gesture.

Fourthly, A fourth scruple he has against kneeling, is its symbolizing scandalously with idolatrous Papists, who signifie thereby Bread-worship or Idolatry.

Ans. This same Argument is as good against sitting ; for that is as much a symbolizing with *Papists*, *Arrians*, and *Heathens*.

Devand. Vat. l. 4.

Alt. Dan. c. 10.

1. Papists. The Pope himself, at some Solemnities, receives the Eucharist sitting. And the Benedictine Monks the Thursday before *Easter*, receive it sitting.

2. Sitting is a symbolizing with Arrians. The *Arrians* in *Poland* denying the Divinity of Christ, were the first Authors, known to those Churches, of this sitting gesture.

3. 'Tis a symbolizing with Pagans. Sitting was the ordinary gesture of Worship in the Romish Pagan Idolatry. *Plutarch* affirms, That the ancient Laws of their Pagan-worship required *ut adorantari sederent*, that they worship sitting. Now if symbolizing with Papists be a sufficient Argument against kneeling, why is not symbolizing with Papists, Arrians, and Heathens, a good Argument against sitting; and so Christ's institution of the Sacrament made void by admitting no gesture to be lawful? Yet by this superstitious fear of sin in kneeling, do they break Communion with us, and scare many wholly from the Sacrament in publick and private both; like that good Physician, that out of tenderness to his Patient, lest he should hurt himself by drinking, stole his silver Cup. 'Tis enough to shew, that this scruple [like the rest] doth not arise from any tenderness of Conscience, but peevishness and obstinacy; that the Church of *England* hath so openly and plainly declared against all adoration of the Sacramental Bread and

Rubrick after the Communion.

Wine, or any corporal presence of Christ's natural flesh and blood therein. And is it not shameful obstinacy when men shall be so tempted to contemn that sacred Ordinance which the Primitive Christians so begg'd upon their knees! that it should so superstitiously be made the cause of Strife and Division, which was intended to unite us in love to one another! That men should chuse to go to Goal rather than to the Lords Table, for fear of kneeling, and all upon such feeble pretences as the best that the learned Pleader could produce! This scruple hath been so oft, so fully, and so convincingly confuted, that Mr. *Baxter* (in his Book against *Bagshaw*) tells us, That the Nonconformists

mists of *London*, upon consult in this matter, did generally determine to receive the Sacrament of the Parish-Minister [and kneeling.] Which shews that they are convinced of the lawfulness of it, and do act in this matter contrary to a known duty, meerly to keep up the Separation. And in his fifth *Disput.* p. 411. That himself would kneel rather than disturb the Churches peace; intimating that himself doth not believe it to be sinful, though he would have his Followers to believe so. I know one or more Nonconformists of the greatest note in *Worcestershire*, who having acknowledged the lawfulness of kneeling, ingenuously declared, that they refused Communion with their Parish-Minister, and gave the Sacrament in houses, meerly in compliance with the people, and for fear of losing them; (as much as to say) For fear lest their Faction should return to Union and Church-Communion, and (as Mr. *Zach. Crofton* said) serve God and do their duty, leaving their Leaders to their dissembling tricks.

The rest of his Exceptions are for the most part such as do vanish in the very naming of them: As,

1. *That every Parishioner should receive the Sacrament twice a year.* As though every Child or Idiot were thereby obliged to it, or as though the Church meant any but persons duly qualified; though the *greatest Nonconformists in Queen *Elizabeth's* time, and the †greatest in King *James's* time, seemed to think three times a year too little, and therefore would have all who were in the Churches Communion, forc'd to receive *Statim temporibus omnes adigendi*, said the latter; forc'd by civil punishment, said the former.

* Mr. Cartwright.

† Alt. Dam.

2. *That all Priests and Deacons are to say daily the Morning and Evening-prayer privately or openly, not being let by sickness or some other urgent cause.* Where is the Exception? or what is the evil of praying when they can awhile? for the injunction intends no more.

3. *He excepts against the use of Godfathers and Godmothers;* though himself [in *Scripture-proof of Infants Baptism*, page preliminary to his Epist. Dedicatory] hath proved sufficiently, that

that the use of Godfathers and Godmothers is, if not Apostolical, yet of greatest antiquity in the Church, it being used in *Hyginus's* time, who lived (as he proves from *Helvicus, Paræus, Prideaux*, and others) within forty years of *St. John*, and convers'd with the Disciples and Familiars of the Apostles; and so (as he urgeth) cannot be ignorant of the practice of the Apostles in baptizing Infants. So that (according to *Mr. Baxter* himself) it's probable enough that the use of Godfathers and Godmothers is Apostolical. However, that it is of greatest antiquity in the Church, himself hath proved, beyond the reach of scruple; nor are any other of his scruples much less futile. Is it not a shame then for those Dissenters to make such pitiful Pleas for Peace and Nonconformity, to disturb the Churches Peace, and endanger the Safety of the Kingdom, on such frivolous pretences and scruples, no more rational or religious than that of their Brethren in *Scotland*, who once scrupled the lawfulness of sending sealed Letters into *Spain*, lest the Wax should be employed in making Tapers to the Virgin *Mary* or other Saints, and so they should be accessory to Idolatry; or than that of a *Worcestershire*-Nonconformist, who kill'd his Fathers Greyhound [contrary to his Interdict and Intreaty] because it was (said he) a profane creature.

SECT. XI.

Now upon a due disquisition of these things, judge who will of these Queries following.

Q. 1. **W**Hether that which *Mr. Baxter* saith of Conformity, be not much more true of Nonconformity (*viz.*) That there is more in *Mr. Tombs* for Anabaptistry, in the late *Hungarian* for Polygamy, in others for Drunkenness, stealing and lying in cases of necessity, than ever hath been published yet for the lawfulness of Nonconformity?

Q. 2. Whe-

Q. 2. Whether the present sad Separation be not kept up chiefly by this Cheat (*viz.*) the Peoples supposing Nonconformists to know Communion with our Church to be unlawful and sinful? whereas they do believe and know the contrary; and accordingly [some of the learnedest of them] have declared publicly the innocence and lawfulness of our Church-Communion, Liturgy, and Ceremonies, &c. who yet could never be brought to say one word to the people of this their belief.

Q. 3. Whether Mr. *Baxter's* taking up with such frivolous Exceptions, and being guilty of so many gross and palpable self-contradictions in defending Nonconformity, be not some proof that he writes what he doth not believe, and designs nothing in his Writings but to amuse the people and support the Separation? and whether he could with all his Learning have devised any thing more, whereby to perpetuate a rigid Separation?

Q. 4. Whether their being so studious of new Scruples, and so busie at reviling Governours and Government, at such a time as this, when Indulgences to them abound, when their Interest gets ground, when they enjoy all that liberty that once they did pretend to desire, when there are attempts of opening the doors of Toleration and Comprehension to them, and when the attempters have been so scurrilously reproacht, and so abusively requited for it, as that excellent person Dr. *Stillingsfleet* and others have been: Whether this be not some signe that they affect Nonconformity, and are fond of their Separation, and to be satisfied with nothing but governing; and that it is not Conscience, [as King *James* said at *Hampton-Court*] but Contumacy that keeps them from conforming?

Q. 5. Whether their refusing to renounce the Covenant, which Mr. *Alsop* calls the great Mountain in their way to Conformity; whether this doth not import their belief of the obligation of that diabolical Sacrament, and so that they look upon themselves as bound thereby to endeavour the alteration of the Government, as soon as they can strengthen their Party, and get power

power and opportunity so to do? And whether the Government had not need to have a very watchful eye over such as so look upon themselves as obliged to endeavour all they can its overthrow, who have sworn, and stand to their Oath, expressly thus never to give themselves to Neutrality or Indifferency in extirpating the Government, [as 'tis now by Law establish'd] but will zealously and constantly continue their endeavours all the days of their lives, to extirpate the Church-government by Bishops, &c. That they will do this against all opposition, against all lets and impediments whatever, as the words of the Oath are.

Q. 6. Whether the Nonconformists would endure in the Kingdom a Party so combined against them, as they are against the present Government, had they the power that once they had?

Q. 7. Whether the like out-cries against Bishops and Ceremonies, the like Paper-scuffles as these Pleas for Peace, were not the immediate fore-runner, and much of the cause of the late Civil War?

Q. 8. Whether all those convulsive State-troubles we are in, all those Fears and Jealousies of Popery that the Nation groans under, be not truly and rightly ascribed to those Abettors of Nonconformist-principles, who banished the D. of T. thither where he was seduced to the Church of *Rome*?

Q. 9. Whether that tenderness of Conscience and purity of Religion which Nonconformists so pretend to, can consist with that schismatical disturbance of the Churches Peace, that despising Dominion, and speaking evil of Dignities, that vilifying of Ministers, and disobeying of Magistrates, which Nonconformists are so notoriously guilty of, and which are as contrary to the Word of God, as Mr. Tombs's Anabaptistry, the Hungarian's Polygamy, lying, stealing, drunkenness, &c.

Q. 10. Whether these Nonconformity-scruples can in the judgment of right Reason or Religion, countervail one of those many evils of those divisions of Church and State, which they occasion? Such are,

I. That

1. That want of Christian love and tenderness of affection which Christ so much enforceth upon his Church and People, much unchristian censoriousness, and rash judging one another, that *μεταξύ* *ἐν*, that bitter envying and strife, which St. James so condemns as carnal, sensual, devilish, *Jam. 3. 14, 15*. By all which God is certainly offended, Christian Charity much violated, the Churches Peace disturbed, its Enemies most gratified, Christianity it self reproached, Irreligion and Ungodliness encouraged. *Constantine* observed, That the separation of the *Donatists* made those that least zeal'd Religion, to deride and scoff at it. *Eusebius* *Eccl. Hist. l. 10.* *Optatus* notes,

That whilst the *Donatists* made a breach in the Church about matters of Discipline, and contended that their Separation was lawful, and the Orthodox Church decry'd it as unlawful, the common people were at a stand about the practice of Religion, *inter vestrum licet, & nostrum non licet, nutant & remigrant animæ populorum*: And one way in particular, whereby it is very apt to promote Profaneness and Irreligion, is by rendering Church-censures, and particularly Excommunication, ineffectual on Offenders. What care they for being excluded the Society of Christians, as long as so many reputed religious, do upon the very account of Religion voluntarily exclude themselves?

2. The endangering the Safety and Interest of the Kingdom: Church-divisions have brought most dreadful Ruines on Kingdoms and Countries. He that reads the History of the Turks and Eastern Empire, shall find that the Christians State-divisions which were founded on their Church-divisions, lay'd the foundation whereon the Turks erected their Dominions in those places; which was the rooting out of their publick Christian Profession. And *Josephus* relates, That the Divisions of *Jerusalem* and the Jewish Nation, exposed them to the desolation brought upon them by the *Romans*. Such is the evil of Church-divisions, that *Dion. Alex.* said, That to suffer Martyrdom, *ἡλικὸν αὐτὴν καὶ ἰσχυρόν*, rather than to divide the Church by Schisms, is not less glorious than to be a Martyr for refusing to offer Sacrifice to Idols.

Prol. de Ecl. Jud.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6.

3. A third evil of the present Church-divisions is, the declining of the regular and publick exercise of their Ministerial Functions, which the ancient Christians shew'd such dislike of, that if any Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon, being ordained, did not undertake his Ministration, he was to be separated from all Christian Society, and to be condemned with the same severity as he who undertook the place and minded it not: which regular and publick Ministration no Nonconformist can in Reason or Religion pretend to, so long as it is in such manifest contempt of lawful Authority as the Holy Scriptures condemn for heinous sin; much less can they pretend to it, that have wholly laid aside their Ministration or Exercise of their Ministry, as is the case of many Nonconformists that I could name.

Were the Pleader employed in this matter (I doubt not) he would produce an Induction of a hundred such particulars, shewing the great evil and sinfulness, the pernicious duct and tendency of the present Separation. Yet this beloved Separation must be kept up, though on no other grounds than that on which the late Civil War was raised, (*viz.*) pretence to Reformation and purity of Religion; like the Papists Oath of Secrecy for carrying on the present Plot, which though every word of it almost be Blasphemy or Treason, yet is called a good and pious Designe. Whereas if they had the liberty of reforming, what were the Reformation but meer Tinkery, mending one hole and making two? as it was with them in Queen Elizabeth's time; there were four Classes that had set up themselves in this Kingdom, who address themselves to the Lord *Burleigh* for alteration of the Liturgy; they had granted them the liberty of reforming, and making a new one, somewhat according to the *Geneva*-form; but this the second Classis disliked, and altered in 600 particulars. That again had the fate to be quarrell'd at by the third Classis, and almost as many faults found with it as the first; and the third was in like manner quarrell'd at by the fourth. So that at last the dissenting of those Brethren,

Con. Ant. c. 17.

Bolton's Narrative.

Dr. Haw. view of the Direct. p. 2.

then, like the division of Tongues at *Babel*, kept the Tower from advancing any higher.

I would now conclude with my humble request to Mr. *Baxter*, That he would forbear any further vilifying of Ministers, railing at Bishops, and scribbling against Ceremonies, &c. as that which hath contributed very far to the great danger we are in of ruine both to Church and Kingdom : But I know 'tis as good forbid his Beard to grow. I shall end therefore as I began, with reminding him of his own words in *Saints Rest*, Epist. Dedic. to the People of *Kedarminster*, p. 8, 9. *If I should zealously press my Judgment on others, and seek to make a Party for it, [as he hath done] and disturb the Peace of the Church, and separate from my Brethren, [as he doth] I should fear lest I should prove a Fire-brand in Hell, [which God forbid] for being such a Fire-brand in the Church [as he is.] I charge you therefore if God should give me up to any factious Church rending course, [as he hath] that you follow me not a step, [as you do.] Amen, Amen.*

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

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